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"BOYD VOTES TO PROTECT INVESTORS "

WASHINGTON: Today, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed tough corporate reform legislation that creates a strong, independent oversight board and increases civil and criminal penalties on corporate wrongdoers. Congressman Allen Boyd (D-North Florida), voted in favor of the House-Senate conference report on corporate reform, which passed in the House by a vote of 423-3. The conference report will likely be passed in the Senate at some point today, and sent to the President to be signed into law tomorrow. One aspect of the conference report calls for the creation of a Public Auditing Regulatory Board, which will end the self-policing practices of the accounting profession and give the board investigative and disciplinary powers over audit firms, subject to SEC review. Also in the conference report are new corporate responsibility standards; including holding CEOs accountable for honest bookkeeping; barring wrongdoing officers and directors from moving company to company; prohibiting corporations from making insider loans to their executives; requiring timely reports when corporate insiders dump stock; banning CEOs from selling stock during blackouts; and requiring real time disclosure of financial information. Additionally, the conference report imposes tough criminal penalties for corporate wrongdoing. This includes criminal penalties for securities fraud and for altering, destroying, or failure to maintain documents, while also giving shareholders adequate time to pursue securities fraud. The conference report provides whistleblower protections to employees of publicly traded companies, protecting them when they disclose information or otherwise assist criminal investigators, federal regulators, Congress, supervisors, or parties in a judicial proceeding in detecting and stopping fraud. Finally, the conference report includes a provision that will ensure that civil penalties and fines will go to compensate victims of securities fraud, including employees of failed corporations that held securities. "The American people must have confidence in our financial markets; and in the free enterprise system, it's the only way to ensure the strength of the economy," said Congressman Boyd. "I believe this bill will help begin the process of restoring that confidence in our markets, and will protect investors from the type of corporate malfeasance that has become so prevalent over the past months."